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Excise

Inspection of liquor shops by the Members of the Excise Licensing Board, etc.

*361 Q.—Mr. C. GOPALA MENON: Will the hon. the Minister for Public Health be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Prohibition League, Calicut, has addressed the Government requesting them that the members of the Excise Licensing Board and the advisory committees should be permitted to inspect the liquor shops within their jurisdiction with a view to see that the conditions of licence with special reference to sanitation, hours of sale, etc., are followed;

(*b*) whether the Government have declined to consider the request favourably; and

(*c*) whether he will be pleased to place on the table of the House the letter of the League and the reply of the Government thereon?

A.—(*a*) & (*b*) Yes.

(*c*) The papers are laid on the table.[a]

Mr. C. GOPALA MENON:—"May I know, with reference to clause (*b*), why the Government declined to consider the request favourably of the Calicut Prohibition League with regard to the inspection of the liquor shops with special reference to the sanitary conditions of those shops?"

The hon. Mr. S MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR:—"In the last but one sentence of the appendix, it is stated 'It will be an advantage however, if any member of the Licensing Board or Advisory Committee will bring to the notice of the Revenue or Excise Officers instances in which the sanitation of a shop is found to be defective or the prescribed hours of sale are disregarded.' So if any defect is pointed out, it will be alright. But with regard to inspection being obligatory on the members of the Licensing Board, the Government have the apprehension that it will spoil the whole case as the licensees may not like their shops to be inspected too often. That is the reason why the Government did not think it necessary."

Mr. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO:—"May I know whether the Inspector, Sub-Inspector and others spoken of in the answer are not interested in the income of the department?"

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR:—"What is talked of in the answer is the sanitation of the shops and nothing else."

Extension of the hour of closure of liquor shops from 8 p.m. to 9 p.m.

* 362 Q.—Mr. C. GOPALA MENON: Will the hon. the Minister for Public Health be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether it is a fact that in the case of arrack shops and foreign liquor taverns in Madras City, the hour of closure has been extended from 8 p.m. to 9 p.m., and if so what reasons led the Government to adopt this course; and

(*b*) what the reasons are for closing the arrack and toddy shops in Tuticorin town and toddy shops in Mangalore town at 9 p.m. while 8 p.m. is the general hour of closure in all other places in the Presidency?

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[a] Printed as Appendix III at page 678 infra.

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A.—(*a*) Yes. The closing hour was changed by the Commissioner from 8 p.m. to 9 p.m. on the ground that closure at 8 p.m. led to over-crowding in shops and to clandestine sales after the regular hours.

(*b*) The information has been called for.

Mr. C. Gopala Menon :—"May I know from the hon. the Minister whether the opening hours remain the same as before?"

The hon. Mr. S. Muthiah Mudaliyar :—"May I know if the hon. Member wants the information for all the shops?"

Mr. C. Gopala Menon :—"For foreign liquor shops."

The hon. Mr. S. Muthiah Mudaliyar :—"The closing hour has been extended from 8 to 9 p.m."

Mr. C. Gopala Menon :—"I want to know if the opening hour remains the same."

The hon. Mr. S. Muthiah Mudaliyar :—"I think so, but I am not quite sure."

Mr. G. Harisarvottama Rao :—"May I know if the hon. the Minister for Excise has considered the alternative of improving the accommodation in these shops instead of extending the time of sale?"

The hon. Mr. S. Muthiah Mudaliyar :—"Improvement of the accommodation of the shops won't bring in all the people within the prescribed time."

Mr. G. Harisarvottama Rao :—"May I know whether the hon. the Minister expects to provide for people who are going there after 8 o'clock? Is that the reason why the closing hour has been extended to 9?"

The hon. Mr. S. Muthiah Mudaliyar :—"Because by closing the shops at 8 o'clock, many people were not able to go there before that time, and it was therefore found necessary to extend it to 9."

Mr. T. Adinarayana Chettiyar :—"May I know if the hon. the Minister is aware that the sales of liquor have increased enormously owing to this change of hours from 8 to 9?"

The hon. Mr. S. Muthiah Mudaliyar :—"Notice."

Mr. T. Adinarayana Chettiyar :—"Has it been extended only in the City of Madras or elsewhere also, Sir?"

The hon. Mr. S. Muthiah Mudaliyar :—"The answer is only as regards the City of Madras."

Mr. G. Harisarvottama Rao :—"May I know for how long this complaint of people not being able to go before 8 o'clock has been in existence?"

The hon. Mr. S. Muthiah Mudaliyar :—"The complaint was there, and then only the hour was changed."

Mr. K. R. Karant :—"May I ask whether this is a part of the policy of prohibition or of getting maximum revenue?"

The hon. Mr. S. Muthiah Mudaliyar :—"Whether the shops are closed at 8 o'clock or 9 o'clock is all the same so far as prohibition is concerned."

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Mr. D. NARAYANA RAJU :—" May I know if the hon. the Minister is prepared to extend the time still further, so that people who cannot go before 9 o'clock may take advantage of such extension of time ? "

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR :—" The question will be considered if there is reasonable complaint."

Mr. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO :—" May I know whether there was any representation made to the Minister that the time should be extended from 8 to 9 ? "

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR :—" It was after getting representations from various people that the time was extended."

Adoption of the system of rationing of country liquor.

*363 Q.—Mr. C. GOPALA MENON : Will the hon. the Minister for Public Health be pleased to state—

(a) whether some system of rationing of country liquor has been adopted in any part of the Presidency ; and

(b) if the answer to (a) is in the affirmative, whether he will be pleased to state in detail the scheme adopted ?

A.—(a) & (b) The arrack shops in the municipalities of Bimlipatam, Vizagapatam and Vizianagram have been sold in auction as a block and leased for a period of two years from 1st April 1929, subject to the right of the Government at the end of six months to determine the lease on 31st March 1930. The sale of liquor in these shops is being rationed, the ration being calculated at 5 per cent less (in round figures) than the average consumption of the shops for the five years ending 30th September 1928.

Number of foreign liquor shops and toddy shops in taluks where country liquor has been prohibited.

*364 Q.—Mr. C. GOPALA MENON : Will the hon. the Minister for Public Health be pleased to state—

(a) the number of foreign liquor shops and toddy shops in the taluks in which the sale of country liquor has been prohibited ;

(b) whether it is a fact that some of the taluks are situated on the borders either of Indian States or French territory ; and

(c) the consumption of toddy and foreign liquor in these taluks before and after the prohibition of the sale of country liquor ?

A.—(a) The number in 1928–29 was as follows :—

Taluk.	Number of toddy shops.	Number of foreign liquor shops.
Shiyali	62	1
Tirutturaippundi ...	98	1
Tiruvadanai	86	1
Tenkasi	40	1
Attur	43	Nil. (Experiment being tried only from 1st April 1929.)